



KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Monday, November 20, 2006

Celebrate, learn about adoptions

November is National Adoption Month. Kalamazoo County is celebrating its fourth annual Adoption Day Tuesday, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Kalamazoo Crosstown Center, 115 Crosstown Parkway. All events will be held on the second floor. The public is invited to attend.

Several agencies will have information booths to share their perspective on adoptions. There will be a panel discussion with professionals answering questions about subsidy, tax credits, the court process, post-adoption services and search and reunion issues. There will be an opportunity to witness several adoption finalization hearings. There are several thousand children in Michigan and in the United States in limbo waiting for adoptive families. These children are victims of abuse, neglect and trauma. There is an enormous need for families to come forward and adopt.

The theme "Giving Thanks for Families" is a magnificent commemoration of children and families. Please come and enjoy this remarkable day.

Jacqueline Carey

Lutheran Adoption Service

Kalamazoo

Walk nets \$176,000 to fight breast cancer

On behalf of the American Cancer Society, I would like to thank the more than 2,600 participants who joined us for the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk at Midlink Business Park Oct. 21. We are proud to announce that they raised more than \$176,000!

The fight is not over. This disease will affect more than 7,000 women in Michigan this year alone. There is still time to raise more money. Please mail donations to the American Cancer Society: 5110 South Sprinkle Road, Portage, MI 49002. Contact the American Cancer Society at 349-8719 for information or donate online at www.cancer.org/stridesonline and select Kalamazoo.

I would like to give special thanks to Pfizer Inc., the Stryker Corp. and Curves for Women for leading the way as flagship sponsors. Special thanks to our media sponsors, 103.3 WKFR and WOOD-TV8.

If you or someone you love has questions about breast cancer, please call the American Cancer Society toll-free at (800) 227-2345.

Abby Neil

American Cancer Society

Portage

Thanks for being information source

Bravo to the editorial staff and Editor Rebecca Pierce for doing a terrific job of explaining the rationale for publishing information on candidates in the Nov. 5 editorial section.

It is refreshing to have a source of information free of all the insulting sound bites and campaign promises fed to the public by the candidates.

The Kalamazoo Gazette's evaluations greatly aid those uninformed voters who vote with whimsy or with little knowledge of candidates or proposals. They also can clarify many biases or notions errantly held by many voters.

I applaud the Gazette's highly informative evaluations of the elections. Not all voters need abide by them, but all should at least consider their points.

Roland Stycos

Kalamazoo

Federal cuts hurt local Head Start

I wonder if Kalamazoo citizens and voters are aware of the Bush administration's cutbacks to Head Start, the most successful anti-poverty program that began 41 years ago as part of Lyndon Johnson's war on poverty. Numerous long-term studies have documented gains made by Head Start children, in comparison to children from the same socio-economic group who did not attend this program. These differences included higher educational attainment and fewer arrests.

Flat funding for five years and a 1 percent cut this past year has meant that programs have had to reduce staff and finally cut service to the 640 families served by Head Start in Kalamazoo County.

The program's classrooms in Kalamazoo, Comstock, Portage, Oshtemo, Climax-Scotts and Vicksburg were forced to reduce classroom services for children to four days from five. Classroom staff hours were reduced.

Also, the program faces the inability to replace buses as they are retired. Please ask our congressman and senators how they have responded to the needs of the poor in our community.

Noreen Reardon

Kalamazoo

Nov. 5 Viewpoint on Proposal 2 insulting

If Jack Hoekstra thinks that a black person could have established a store on Portage Street like Jurien Hoekstra, he is delusional. His Nov. 5 Viewpoint, shows how ignorant whites can be of their history and the reality of racial inequality.

If local black families cannot compete with his family's list of successful businessmen, teachers, an alderman, school board president and college graduates, it has nothing to do with a lack of "high goals and standards" or not following "God's commandments." The suggestion that minorities have not studied, worshipped or worked hard is insulting.

Minorities have served this country, community and God as well or better than Jurien Hoekstra's kids, but were not equal under the law until 1964. Whites kept blacks out of their schools, their businesses and their churches, but now want to think that none of that matters.

Mr. Hoekstra was correct in one thing: For years, people have been given jobs or admitted to schools, not by merit but by race, and this was unfair and wrong! Mr. Hoekstra just doesn't want to take the small steps toward making things right.

Daniel Davis

Portage

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